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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/820,661	04/07/2004	Paul A. Martin	SUN04-0234	8024
57960 7590 09/03/2008 PVF -- SUN MICROSYSTEMS INC. C/O PARK, VAUGHAN & FLEMING LLP 2820 FIFTH STREET DAVIS, CA 95618-7759				
			EXAMINER KIM, PAUL	
			ART UNIT 2169	PAPER NUMBER
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**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

### Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/820,661

**Applicant(s)**

MARTIN, PAUL A.

**Examiner**

PAUL KIM

**Art Unit**

2161

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 June 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-15, 17-29 and 31-42 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-15, 17-29 and 31-42 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DETAILED ACTION**

1. This Office action is responsive to the following communication: Amendment filed on 11 June 2008.
2. Claims 1, 3-15, 17-29, and 31-42 are pending and present for examination.

### ***Response to Amendment***

3. Claims 1, 15, and 29 have been amended.
4. No claims have been further cancelled.
5. No claims have been newly added.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. **Claims 1, 4, 6-9, 11, 13-14, 15, 18, 20-23, 25, 27-28, 29, 32, 34-37, 39, and 41-42** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McGregor (NPL, "Practical C++, published by Que on 11 August 1999) in view of Guthrie, II (U.S. Patent No. 7,225,210, hereinafter referred to as Guthrie), filed on 20 November 2003, published on 26 May 2005, and issued on 29 May 2007.
8. **As per independent claims 1, 15, and 29**, McGregor, in combination with Guthrie, discloses:

A method for performing a lock-free update to one or more fields in an existing node in a linked list, comprising:

receiving a reference to the existing node in the linked list, wherein the existing node contains the one or more fields to be updated {See McGregor, page 8, wherein this reads over "start at either the head or the tail and traverse the list until the item is found"};

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obtaining a new node to be added to the linked list, wherein other processes do not possess references to the new node and therefore cannot initially access the new node {See McGregor, page 9, wherein this reads over "allocated a new node"};

copying a snapshot of the existing node to the new node {See Guthrie, col. 8, lines 20-67, wherein this reads over "the snapshot system created a new node 6 and incremented the snapshot identifier of node 0 to 1"}, which includes copying a next pointer of the existing node to the new node, so that the new node points to a node immediately following the existing node {See McGregor, page 7, wherein this reads over "the address of the new node is assigned to a node pointer"; and page 11, wherein this reads over "all you have to do is swap the pointers of the nodes on either side of the node you are deleting"};

updating one or more fields in the new node that correspond to the one or more fields in the existing node {See McGregor, page 9, wherein this reads over "set the Integer value for the node"};

performing a single atomic operation that modifies the next pointer of the existing node to point to the new node and also marks the next pointer to indicate that the existing node is deleted, whereby the new node becomes part of the linked list and the existing node is deleted in a single atomic operation {See McGregor, page 11, wherein this reads over "all you have to do is swap the pointers of the nodes on either side of the node you are deleting"}; and

splicing the existing node out of the linked list by atomically modifying the next pointer of a node immediately preceding the existing node in the linked list to point to the new node, instead of pointing to the existing node {See McGregor, page 11, wherein this reads over "all you have to do is swap the pointers of the nodes on either side of the node you are deleting"}.

wherein copying the snapshot of the existing node to the new node further involves examining the next pointer of the existing node to determine if the existing node has been deleted. {See Thatté et al, C9:L29-59, wherein this reads over "no outstanding pointers to the object from non-garbage objects" and "the outstanding pointers to the object may point to empty space, i.e., unallocated memory, or to some undesired object" and "[a] deleted object is specially marked as tombstoned when it is deleted").

While McGregor may fail to expressly disclose the copying of a snapshot of an existing node, Guthrie discloses a snapshot data system wherein snapshots of nodes comprising a plurality of fields are taken and copied. Accordingly, the combination of invention disclosed by McGregor and Guthrie would disclose an invention which would comprise a method for obtaining a snapshot of an existing node and applying said copy to a newly created node such that updates may be made to the newly created node without necessitating a lock of the existing node. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above invention suggested by McGregor by combining it with the invention disclosed by Guthrie.

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One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do this modification such that a newly created node, which consists of copied fields which have been updated, may be inserted into a linked list.

While McGregor may fail to expressly disclose the method step of "wherein copying the snapshot of the existing node to the new node further involves examining the next pointer of the existing node to determine if the existing node has been deleted," Thatte discloses a method wherein objects may be specially marked as tombstoned and any outstanding pointers may be checked. Accordingly, the combination of inventions disclosed by McGregor and Thatte would disclose an invention wherein the existing node may be tombstoned and all related pointers of said existing node may be deleted in a garbage collection process. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above invention suggested by McGregor by combining it with the invention disclosed by Thatte.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do this modification such that it may be determined prior to copy whether an existing node has already been deleted.

9. **As per dependent claims 4, 18, and 32,** McGregor, in combination with Guthrie, discloses:

The method of claim 1, wherein copying a snapshot of the existing node to the new node involves:

copying the contents of the existing node to the new node {See Guthrie, col. 8, lines 43-54, wherein this reads over "[t]he snapshot system copied the data of root node 0 to the root node 6 of the snapshot"};

examining the next pointer of the existing node to determine if the existing node has been deleted {See McGregor, page 8, wherein this reads over "CIntList::Find( ) function"}; and

if so taking a remedial action;

otherwise, not taking the remedial action.

10. **As per dependent claims 6, 20, and 34,** McGregor, in combination with Guthrie, discloses:

The method of claim 1, further comprising deleting a target node from the linked list by:

receiving a reference to the target node to be deleted from the linked list {See McGregor, page 8, wherein this reads over "CIntList::Find( ) function"};

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atomically marking a next pointer in the target node to indicate that the target node is deleted (See McGregor, page 11, wherein this reads over "all you have to do is swap the pointers of the nodes on either side of the node you are deleting"); and

atomically modifying the next pointer of a node immediately preceding the target node in the linked list to point to a node immediately following the target node in the linked list, instead of pointing to the target node, thereby splicing the target node out of the linked list (See McGregor, page 11, wherein this reads over "all you have to do is swap the pointers of the nodes on either side of the node you are deleting").

11. **As per dependent claims 7, 21, and 35, McGregor, in combination with Guthrie, discloses:**

The method of claim 6, wherein after the target node is spliced out of the linked list, the method further comprises modifying the next pointer of the target node so that the next pointer remains marked but points to a node immediately preceding the target node instead of the node immediately following node the target node in the linked list (See McGregor, page 11, wherein this reads over "all you have to do is swap the pointers of the nodes on either side of the node you are deleting").

12. **As per dependent claims 8, 22, and 36, McGregor, in combination with Guthrie, discloses:**

The method of claim 1, further comprising inserting an additional node into the linked list by:

identifying a node immediately preceding the additional node in the linked list (See McGregor, page 8, wherein this reads over "CIntList::Find( ) function";

identifying a node immediately following the additional node in the linked list (See McGregor, page 8, wherein this reads over "CIntList::Find( ) function"; and

splicing the additional node into the linked list by, setting the next pointer for the additional node to point to the immediately following node (See McGregor, page 11, wherein this reads over "all you have to do is swap the pointers of the nodes on either side of the node you are deleting"), and

atomically updating the next pointer of the immediately preceding node to point to the additional node (See McGregor, page 11, wherein this reads over "all you have to do is swap the pointers of the nodes on either side of the node you are deleting").

13. **As per dependent claims 9, 23, and 37, McGregor, in combination with Guthrie, discloses:**

The method of claim 1, further comprising

reading a snapshot of multiple fields from a target node in the linked list by:

reading the multiple fields from the target node (See Guthrie, col. 8, lines 20-38, wherein this reads over "[t]emplate 100 illustrates the fields of the node");

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examining the next pointer of the target node to determine if the target node has been deleted {See McGregor, page 8, wherein this reads over "CintList::Find( ) function"}; and

if so, taking a remedial action;

otherwise, not taking the remedial action.

14. **As per dependent claims 11, 25, and 39**, McGregor, in combination with Guthrie, discloses:

The method of claim 1, wherein atomically modifying the next pointer of the existing node to indicate that the existing node is deleted involves setting a "deleted bit" in the next pointer {See McGregor, page 11, wherein this reads over "reset the node's address to zero"}.

15. **As per dependent claims 13, 27, and 41**, McGregor, in combination with Guthrie, discloses:

The method of claim 1, wherein a given node in the linked list includes:

a key that contains an identifier for the given node {See McGregor, page 4, wherein this reads over "Find ( ) Returns a pointer to the first node containing the specified integer value"};

one or more fields containing data values or pointers to data values associated with the given node {See Guthrie, col. 8, lines 20-38, wherein this reads over "[t]emplate 100 illustrates the fields of the node"}; and

a next pointer that contains the address of a node that immediately follows the given node in the linked list, and that also contains a deleted indicator, which indicates whether the given node has been deleted {See McGregor, page 7, wherein this reads over "the address of the new node is assigned to a node pointer"; and page 11, wherein this reads over "all you have to do is swap the pointers of the nodes on either side of the node you are deleting"}.

16. **As per dependent claims 14, 28, and 42**, McGregor, in combination with Guthrie, discloses:

The method of claim 1, further comprising periodically performing a garbage-collection operation to reclaim deleted nodes that have become unreachable {See McGregor, page 11, wherein this reads over "[d]elete the node (which has now been unlinked from the list), reset the node's address to zero"}.

17. **Claims 3, 17, and 31** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

McGregor, in view of Guthrie, and further in view of Official Notice.

18. **As per dependent claims 3, 17, and 31**, the Examiner takes Official Notice that it would have been obvious and widely-known to one of ordinary skill in the art to execute a splicing process should a prior process fail to perform the splicing operation.

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19. **Claims 5, 10, 12, 19, 24, 26, 33, 38, and 40** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McGregor, in view of Guthrie, and further in view of Lippman et al (NPL, "C++ Primer," published by Addison Wesley Professional on 2 April 1998.

20. **As per dependent claims 5, 19, and 33**, McGregor, in combination with Guthrie and Lippman, discloses:

The method of claim 4, wherein taking the remedial action involves:

following the next pointer of the existing node in an attempt to find an updated version of the existing node {See McGregor, page 8, wherein this reads over "CIntList::Find( ) function"};

if an updated version of the existing node is found, copying a snapshot of the updated version of the existing node to the new node {See Guthrie, col. 8, line 55 – col. 9, line 9, wherein this reads over "[t]he snapshot system then created a new node for the node being modified" and "set the snapshot identifier field of node 8 to 2 and set the previous field of node 8 to 2"}; and

if an updated version of the existing node is not found, indicating that the remedial action fails {See Lippman, page 5, wherein this reads over "assert ( )"}.

While McGregor and Guthrie may fail to expressly disclose a method of providing an indication of a remedial action failure, Lippman discloses a method for announcing a condition that triggers the assertion. Accordingly, the combination of invention disclosed by McGregor, Guthrie, and Lippman would disclose an invention which would comprise a method for announcing a triggering condition. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above invention suggested by McGregor and Guthrie by combining it with the invention disclosed by Lippman.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do this modification such that an indication may be provided that a certain remedial action failed.

21. **As per dependent claims 10, 24, and 38**, McGregor, in combination with Guthrie and Lippman, discloses:

The method of claim 9, wherein taking the remedial action involves:



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following the next pointer of the target node in an attempt to find an updated version of the target node {See McGregor, page 8, wherein this reads over "CintList::Find( ) function"; and

if an updated version of the target node is found, repeating the process of reading a snapshot of the multiple fields from the updated version of the target node {See Guthrie, col. 8, line 55 – col. 9, line 9, wherein this reads over "[t]he snapshot system then created a new node for the node being modified" and "set the snapshot identifier field of node 8 to 2 and set the previous field of node 8 to 2"; and

if an updated version of the existing node is not found, indicating that the remedial action fails {See Lippman, page 5, wherein this reads over "assert ( )"}.

While McGregor and Guthrie may fail to expressly disclose a method of providing an indication of a remedial action failure, Lippman discloses a method for announcing a condition that triggers the assertion. Accordingly, the combination of invention disclosed by McGregor, Guthrie, and Lippman would disclose an invention which would comprise a method for announcing a triggering condition. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above invention suggested by McGregor and Guthrie by combining it with the invention disclosed by Lippman.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do this modification such that an indication may be provided that a certain remedial action failed.

**22. As per dependent claims 12, 26, and 40,** McGregor, in combination with Guthrie and Lippman, discloses:

The method of claim 1, wherein while atomically modifying the next pointer of the existing node,

if the next pointer indicates that the existing node is already deleted, the atomic modification operation fails and the method further comprises taking a remedial action to deal with the fact that the existing node is already deleted {See Lippman, page 5, wherein this reads over "assert ( )";

otherwise, continuing performing the atomic modification operation.

While McGregor and Guthrie may fail to expressly disclose a method of providing an indication of a remedial action failure, Lippman discloses a method for announcing a condition that triggers the assertion. Accordingly, the combination of invention disclosed by McGregor, Guthrie, and Lippman would

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disclose an invention which would comprise a method for announcing a triggering condition. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above invention suggested by McGregor and Guthrie by combining it with the invention disclosed by Lippman.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do this modification such that an indication may be provided that a certain remedial action failed.

### ***Response to Arguments***

23. Applicant's arguments with respect to claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

### ***Conclusion***

24. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

25. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to PAUL KIM whose telephone number is (571)272-2737. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 9am - 5pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tony Mahmoudi can be reached on (571) 272-4078. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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